Nuggets Of News

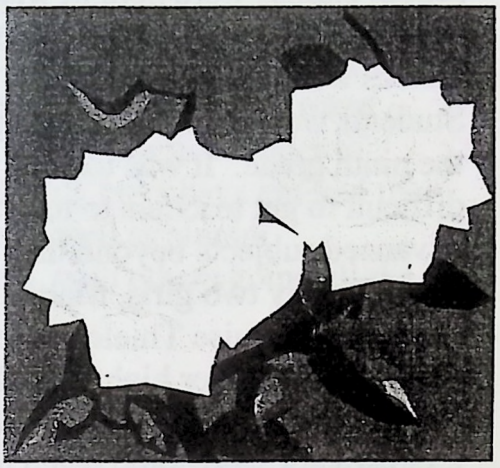
January 2005

News, Photographs and Events of the Gold Hill Historical Society, Est. 1986
Meetings are held the third Wednesday each month at 6:30 PM at the Museum, 504 First Avenue, Gold Hill, Oregon
(except August when the annual potluck is held at noon on the third Sunday)
Mailing address: PO Box 26, Gold Hill, Oregon 97525-0026 Telephone: (541) 855-1182 Fax: (541)776-4263
Museum Hours: Thursday, Friday & Saturday, 12 noon to 4 p.m., except holidays
Admission FREE, donations accepted

WISHING YOU A PEACEFUL 2005

One day at a time, we take charge of the blank pages on the new calendar. Let's hope we all can find the time and energy to fill our hearts with the warm gratification that comes from giving of our personal schedule and expertise for the good of others. Isn't that what it's all about? In a perfect world, that would solve so many woes.

As with all volunteer organizations, the Gold Hill Historical Society relies upon individual acts of kindness in the ongoing preservation of local history. Consider the first page of the calendar year as an excellent starting point. The ultimate gift is time. Simple things like raking up leaves, sweeping a floor or walkway, cleaning glass front display cases, taking trash out, welcoming visitors, sorting paperwork, etc., the list is almost endless. These are the same types of chores each of our homes require. Hopefully we each will be able to extend our personal expertise beyond our usual boundaries, to include a wider circle of humanity. And then, be ready to experience a greater sense of self esteem and inner peace in 2005!



MEMORIAL WALL

The GHHS Memorial Wall project is now ready for viewing. This monumental project stands as a salute to the persistence of one talented man. Ted Wharton persevered through bad weather, health problems, hunting season, and the holidays to almost single-handedly design, manufacture, and install these two sturdy wall sections. By utilizing some of the leftover rock from the memorial garden wall to the base of the two memorial wall segments, he blended the design into one matching element. The honorees memorialized represent both the present and the past. For a minimum donation of $25 a name may be added.

HISTORY OF GOLD HILL HIGH by student Maurise Paulson (in The Nugget) May 31, 1951

The Gold Hill School (present day Hanby Middle School) was built in the year 1910 on the present site, a very much needed building for the growing elementary grades and the growing needs of the high school.

Prior to the building of the new school, all grade and the high school classes were held in what is now the City Hall. High School classes were held upstairs. Students were able to go through the ninth grade. It was too difficult to get teachers to teach advanced subjects beyond that year. Finally two girls, Mabel Houch and Louise Thiele, were so eager to get further high school credits that the school board hired an instructor who could teach the required subjects for the tenth grade.

First classes were held in the new building in September 1910 and full four-year high school courses were available to students. College preparatory courses, business courses, domestic arts, shop, dramatics, music and athletics have been available to the classes through out the years.

The first graduation was held May 23, 1913, with one girl graduating. She was Miss Hattie Hodges, now Mrs. W.S. Yordon of Grants Pass. The program was held in the old Opera House, then on Fourth Avenue, three or four buildings east of the present location of the Community Methodist Church, upstairs in the Peterson-Lance Store building.

Several years later a wing was constructed on the north side of the school building. The main floor was made into an auditorium with raised platform and for many years assemblies, plays, graduation exercises, school dances and other activities were held in it. The upper floor was used for high school class rooms and study hall.

In 1924 the gymnasium was built and was used primarily by the high school classes for athletics and other activities. The dressing rooms were small and by the standards of today were very inadequate.

Before the gym was built, girls and boys practiced and played basketball in the old school building in the City Hall. They were permitted to play in the old pavilion that stood on the railroad right of way near the highway at Fifth Street. If the owners of the pavilion wished to use it when a game was to be held there, the teams would go to the Opera

House and plan on that floor. Because the authorities wouldn't let the basketball lines be painted on the floor, the boys would have to get down on their knees before each game and draw them on the floor with chalk. These floors were too short for regulation basketball, but many games were won and lost by the home teams with other valley teams. They also went to the Ashland tournaments and sometimes even placed for awards.

As time went on the school plant was modernized as much as possible. Newer and more efficient heating plants were installed; a play shed was added on the north side of the gym; classrooms and equipment was placed in the basement for a school cafeteria where hot lunches were served. The first year only hot chocolate was served, then chocolate and one hot dish and now a complete lunch is served to students.

Not too many years ago acreage was purchased for a new high school site. Due to prohibitive prices for materials, unavailable material and other reasons, the buildings were not started. In 1948, the voters of the district, with voters of Central Point, Tolo, Willow Springs and Table Rock, voted to consolidate the several districts into one district, which in known as District No. 6. Immediate steps were taken to purchase land for a new high school and bonds were voted to build it. The building will be completed and occupied in September 1951. The school plant at Gold Hill will be entirely used by grade school.

During World Wars I and II, many of the students and alumni entered the different branches of the service and served in many parts of the world. In the most recent war in Korea a large number of student body boys have entered the service as well as alumni members, with others going all the time.

Those students who have graduated from the Gold Hill High School and those who have attended buy not yet graduated, will always remember it with affection and may even regret that they will not be able to finish here. But ours is the age of progress and the new is accepted when the old is outgrown.

So from a graduating class of one student in 1913 to a class of twelve in 1951, we hold only gratitude in our hearts to those who have made our education possible and for encouragement for the further progress in the years to come.

Three Shots Around the World

By a much younger Ted Wharton, December 22, 1936

Mark Campbell and I were at a friend's cabin on the lower Rogue River while on a fishing trip. As we were preparing breakfast, a shaggy-looking old prospector ambled into camp. "How bout some eats, lads?" he said in a hearty voice. "Sure," we replied, "If you'll afford some amusement while we get it cooked." "Well," he said, "I'll tell you a true story." I plopped an egg into the skillet and sat back on my haunches to listen. Mark dropped his axe and did likewise. After a moment of mumbled thought, the old man started out something like this –

(The prospector's story)

I suddenly found myself awake and listening intently. After about three seconds, which seemed more like minutes to me, there came a terrific pounding at the door. The pounding continued with muffled exasperated yells intermingled. I leaped for the door, grabbing my gun on the way. The instant I unlocked the door a sorry sight burst into the cabin. It was James Woodbury, the grizzled old codger who lived up Slither Creek, about two miles from me. He was in his shirt and flannel underwear but his pants and shoes were missing. His face was streaked with sweat and he was carrying an ancient gun with a bent barrel. To top it off, he had a new plug hat with the top dented in. "Quick," he gasped, grabbing my arm. "He nearly caught me, and my gun jammed." "What?" I replied in surprise, and then laughed as I noticed the gun was an old civil war relic that he had grabbed in his haste. "It's a polar bear or something," he said. "Anyway, it's big and plenty hostile."

"Just a minute and I'll come see the critter." So saying, I stepped into the next room, pulled on my hip boots, riding pants, tuxedo coat, and an old derby hat. Then I inspected and loaded my muzzle loading ball and cap, rapid fire musket before stepping outside. Feeling my sheath knife in my belt, I announced that I was now ready to go back with him.

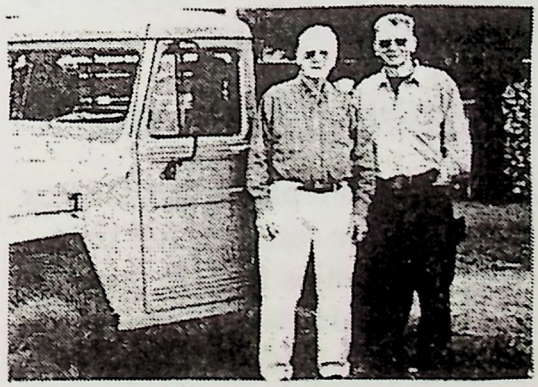
Off we sets, towards an unknown mystery, with Woodbury in the lead. "Follow me," Woodbury shouted, as he shivered from lack of shoes and pants. "It was up this ways." The sun was just doming up as we came to a natural bowl in the hills, with a small lake in the center. It was about four-thirty. We stopped to catch our breath when old Woodbury yelled, "Look out!" as he dove into the water. I turned just in time to find myself looking

eye to eye with a huge silver tip grizzly bear, darn near as big as a house. I turned and ran for the hills, loading my gun with several more musket balls as I raced away. After about seven or eight miles, I began to tire and the bear gained on me. I was running due east. After running another three or so miles I struck upon an idea. We were crossing a flat spot on top of Bald Mountain, the highest mountain in the vicinity. Old Bruno was close behind. I aimed my gun due east and fired three shots in quick succession. The terrible kick from the musket knocked me flat. The three bullets traveled around the world in about two seconds, and as the bear skidded to a stop I heard a dull thud as my first shot struck him in the back of the head. As he fell, the other two bullets whizzed over my head. One struck Scotland. The other, gradually losing power after circumnavigating the globe five times, dropped into the Bay of Bengal. The bullets, while traveling, reappeared every two seconds, therefore traveling at a rate of forty-three million, two hundred thousand miles an hour. This may seem a bit unusual for gun powder, but it was of my own concoction mixed up from a famous tooth powder formula which I had bought for ten cents at a Carson City carnival twelve years ago. "If you are in doubt about the truth of my story," said the prospector with a yawn, "you can prove it by my Uncle Jake, who died ten years ago." (End of story)

"What happened to the fellow who jumped into the lake?" I gasped. "Oh, he caught a mess of fish for breakfast while he was waiting for me to return," answered the prospector. I suddenly realized something was burning. Looking down, there was the egg I was frying, cremated, and the fire nearly burned out.

NOW FOR AN ELDER VERSION OF OUR AUTHOR

On October 23rd, the GHHS Museum was a happy birthday scene for our now octogenarian+ author. From Ithica, New York, Ted's only brother, Charles initiated a surprise party to be held here in Gold Hill. Charles and wife Gloria traveled cross country to attend. Along with several friends, four generations showed up to honor Ted, then a fifth generation was added the next day when a celebratory dinner was shared with Aunt Ruth in Grants Pass.



Charles and Ted Wharton, October 2004

CEMETERY NEWS UPDATE

With the weather blustering and blowing, not much work has been completed at either cemetery lately. Joyce Wayland and Marge Martin have been preparing burn piles at the Rock Point Cemetery. That should clear out the final remains of the tree cutting necessitated earlier this year. All of the larger dead branches were collected and split as firewood. The Hays Cemetery fencing projected, fully grant funded, is finally due to commence this month.

Dues Reminder

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Annual membership dues are delinquent as of January 1st. GHHS dues remain at $10 per family membership per year. We hope that you enjoy and appreciate receiving this newsletter, which is funded from dues collected, as just one of your membership benefits. Thank you to all who have already renewed their membership.

SUNSHINE & SYMPATHY

A second hip replacement for Rex Parker and the resultant full time nurse maid duties for Lyn Parker have sidelined two of our most dependable volunteers. Hopefully they both will be up to joining us again in a few weeks. Marge Martin is a recent ex-cataract patient. For a few days she looked as if she had lost a boxing match, but the beauty has returned. Janet Sessions' is fully recovered from two cataract and two toe surgeries within the past three months. Good health beckons!

ELECTIONS

Nominations and elections of officers will be held at the January 19th meeting. Hope to see you there, either as an enthusiastic volunteer or as nominator for a willing volunteer. The regularly scheduled meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the museum, 504 First Avenue, Gold Hill. All are welcome!

NEW PROJECT

A professional video/DVD starring the town of Gold Hill has been contracted with Roger Fishman. This venture was undertaken and funded by the GHHS after viewing a recently completed video of Butte Falls produced by his company. Hopefully, by the time the next GHHS newsletter hits your mail box, we can fill you in on the show's content, price, sales locations, and premiere date. With the new downtown improvements, we should shine beautifully on film. Another way to preserve the present, for the future!

Gold Hill Historical Society
Membership/Renewal/Volunteer Form

Name_____
Street Address_____
Mailing Address_____
City/State/Zip Code_____
Telephone_____
E-mail Address?_____

Family Membership $10.00 Annually
____New
____Renewal

____Contribution

Return form to:
Gold Hill Historical Society
504 First Avenue/POB 26
Gold Hill, Oregon 97525

____Yes, I would like to volunteer
- ____help at special events
- ____a few hours
- ____an occasional day
- ____a regular schedule
  - ____Monthly
  - ____Weekly
- ____be a museum greeter
- ____help inventory artifacts
- ____enter data into computer
- ____help with Memorial Garden
- ____other _____

HISTORY MUSEUMS in JACKSON COUNTY

Camp White
Highway 62
VA Rehabilitation Bldg.
White City
826-2111

Eagle Point
301 N. Royal Avenue
826-4166

Gold Hill
504 First Avenue
855-1182

Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History and Children' Museum
206 N. 5th Street
773-6536

Rogue River
1st & Oak
582-3088

Talent
206 E. Main Street
512-8838

Trail Creek Tavern Museum
144 Old Highway 62
(No phone)

Gold Hill Historical Society
504 First Avenue
Post Office Box 26
Gold Hill, Oregon 97525

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - Clare Moore
Vice-President - Marge Martin
Secretary - Lyn Parker
Treasurer - Maureen Smith
Ted Wharton
Marie Hulse
Janet Sessions

GOALS

The Gold Hill Historical Society's goals are to collect, document, and preserve the history of the Gold Hill area through oral histories, photographs, artifacts and books.

SAVING THE PAST

CONGRATULATIONS!

Our members and volunteers continue to shine wherever they go. Joyce Wayland recently was honored at Patrick School to receive The President's Volunteer Award for having spent OVER 500 hours working with children there. This prestigious award included the certificate, a pin and a congratulatory letter from the White House.
Armella Wharton was voted Volunteer of the Year 2004 by the Medford chapter of the American Sewing Guild for her generosity in donations of time and talent.